

Testimony of Tania Martinez

In-State Tuition

Higher Education Committee

March 15, 2011

My name is Tania Martinez and I am a student of the University of Connecticut's School of Social Work and an employee of a non-profit organization.

I would like to thank you, the Higher Education Committee, for the opportunity to testify today. I am here in support of the bill H.B No 6390, An Act Concerning Access to Postsecondary Education.

I am in favor of this bill because I believe that any resident of Connecticut should have the opportunity to further their education and improve their skill in order to have a better life. In addition, an individual with a degree not only is helping his or her self but is also helping the community where he or she resides. For such reason, accepting the bill H.B. No 6390 is not only the moral thing to do, but the logical thing to do. As an immigrant I had experience the difference that Postsecondary education made in my life. My father brought to this country with the purpose to have a better life and my parents always told me that a better life could be achieve by a Postsecondary education. My native country is Peru and where I come from my parents could not afford any type of Postsecondary education. In the process of my parents wanting the best future for me, when I was fourteen years old my parents decided that I should move to United States, even though, I did not want to come to this country. This period of my life was not easy because my mother and sister stayed behind in Peru. As many young immigrants that come to United States you have no choice on deciding to come to this country and eventually, however, this country becomes all that you know.

Now, I am a graduate student of the University of Connecticut's School of Social Work and furthering my education in order to enhance my skills and better contribute to my community. Postsecondary education changed my life. I was very shy and insecure when I was attending high school because I struggled adapting to this country and learning the language. In the process of obtaining a college degree I did not only obtained a diploma but I also obtained the skills to have a better opportunity in life. I changed from somebody that would not like to talk in public because I my face would turn red, to somebody secure, confident and whiling to take new challenges. Currently my husband and I are home owners, which we were able to afford due to our carriers.

I had being working in the social work field for eight years. Through these years I mainly had work with clients in the inner cities. I had experience, how my clients struggle trying to graduate high school. Nevertheless, it breaks my heart knowing that after they graduate, they will continue

struggling trying to attend college because they would not be able to afford the out-state tuition fees and will not have the same opportunities that I had.

I urge you to support this important legislation for a variety of reasons. The main reasons are because Connecticut will have a younger skillful work force, which can provide higher tax returns, more home ownership, and a younger work force living in Connecticut, besides there is a decrease of high school student attending college. Furthermore, is the right thing to do because you are providing a youth the opportunity for a better life. As well as the logical thing to do because the bill H.B. No. 6390 could provide more economic power to Connecticut.

Thank you,

Tania Martinez